

June 15, 2004

FOURTH ANNUAL TRAFFICKING REPORT IS RELEASED

To inspire greater determination, creativity, and cooperation among governments in the fight against modern-day slavery, U.S. Secretary of State Colin Powell released the fourth annual *Trafficking in Persons Report* at the State Department in Washington Monday, June 14.

Ukraine was rated in Tier Two of the report, an indication that the country does not yet fully comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, but is making significant efforts to do so. Ukraine is a source country for women and girls trafficked to Europe and the Middle East, as well as for men trafficked to Europe and North America. It is also a major transit country for Asian and Moldovan victims trafficked to Western destinations. Ukraine has seen an increase in the trafficking of children, especially orphans, during the last year. While the government of Ukraine has made progress in combating trafficking, it still lags in terms of implementing the Comprehensive Program for Combating Trafficking in Persons, coordinating with law enforcement officials of destination countries, and fighting government corruption.

"Criminals and criminal networks are targeting some of the most vulnerable people in Ukraine," said former U.S. Rep. John Miller, who leads U.S. Government efforts against human trafficking. "We're reaching out in the spirit of partnership to encourage all governments to accelerate efforts to end this atrocity and protect people from human trafficking schemes."

Trafficking in persons is modern-day slavery, involving victims who are forced, defrauded or coerced into labor or sexual exploitation. The 2004 report estimates 600,000 to 800,000 people are trafficked in this manner across national borders each year. Of those, 47 percent are women, 34 percent are girls under the age of 18, and 16 percent are boys under the age of 18 meaning more than 80 percent of victims are female and 50 percent are children.

Millions more are thought to be trafficked within country borders worldwide.

The U.S. devoted more than \$70 million in anti-trafficking in persons programs abroad in the last fiscal year, and, in a September speech to the U.N. General Assembly, President Bush committed an additional \$50 million in U.S. spending abroad this year. U.S. assistance for anti-trafficking programs in Ukraine totaled nearly \$3 million last year with \$1.5 million expected this year.

The fight against human trafficking is attracting worldwide attention because trafficking threatens human rights, public health, and the safety and security of nations.

The 140-country *Trafficking in Persons Report* is the most comprehensive worldwide report on the efforts of governments to combat severe forms of trafficking in persons. Its purpose is to raise global awareness and spur countries to take effective actions to counter trafficking in persons.

The efforts of governments to fight human trafficking are rated in tiers in the report based on tangible actions taken throughout the year. The standards used to determine these ratings can be found in the 2004 report at www.state.gov/g/tip.

Attached is an excerpt from the *Trafficking in Persons Report* regarding Ukraine. The complete worldwide Trafficking in Persons Report is available to the public on the State Department's website <http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2004>.

Excerpt from the State Department's Trafficking in Persons Report, June 14, 2004

UKRAINE (TIER 2)

Ukraine is a source country for women and girls trafficked to Europe and the Middle East for the purpose of sexual exploitation, and for men trafficked to Europe and North America for forced labor. Ukraine is also a significant transit country for Asian and Moldovan victims trafficked to Western destinations. Ukraine has seen an increase in the trafficking of children, especially orphans, during the last year.

The Government of Ukraine does not yet fully comply with minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. Despite resource constraints, Ukraine continues to make progress in combating trafficking, demonstrated by a steady increase in prosecutions and convictions. But progress has lagged in implementing the Comprehensive Program for Combating Trafficking in Persons, coordinating with law enforcement officials of destination countries, and fighting government corruption. The Ukraine parliament should adopt amendments to the criminal code that will strengthen anti-trafficking legislation.

Prosecution

Ukraine's criminal code criminalizes trafficking in persons, but does not address recruitment nor clearly define internal trafficking as a separate crime. The government has drafted and introduced to parliament amendments to the criminal code to bring Ukraine into compliance with international standards, but they have not yet been adopted. In 2003, prosecutors tried 41 trafficking cases and convicted traffickers in 29 cases. These results represent increases of 215% and 190%, respectively, over 2002. Those 29 cases involved 32 defendants of whom 11 were sentenced to prison terms, two to restraint of liberty in correction facilities, and 19 to probation. Despite this improvement, the government should provide oversight to the sentencing process to ensure that judges are implementing the legislation effectively, and to prevent the risk that judges will be improperly influenced. Corruption remains a problem for Ukraine in government and at all levels of society. Official corruption decreases the effectiveness of law enforcement efforts on trafficking. Cooperation and coordination with law enforcement officials in destination countries has improved, but remains inadequate to address the scope of the problem. Weak border security contributes to trafficking, especially along the Ukraine-Russia border.

Protection

The police and Ukrainian embassies abroad engage NGOs to provide trafficking victims with protection services, particularly at the airport and the port of Odessa. Law enforcement officers should continue efforts to publicize and provide resources for witness protection programs. During prosecution in 2003, 278 victims testified, an increase over the 202 victims who testified in 2002. In June 2003, the Ukrainian Cabinet of Ministers approved guidelines for establishing and operating victim rehabilitation centers. The Government of Ukraine introduced simplified procedures in late 2003 to assist victims of trafficking and to facilitate their repatriation.

Prevention

Although the Ukrainian Government has made some progress in implementing its Comprehensive Program for Combating Trafficking in Persons, its Interdepartmental Coordination Council for Combating Trafficking in Persons has had no formal meetings since its establishment in December 2002. Local commissions on combating trafficking were created throughout Ukraine pursuant to the Comprehensive Program, but their quality and effectiveness vary. Regionally throughout Ukraine, NGOs collaborated with Family and Youth Affairs Departments on information and education campaigns, such as peer training at schools, universities, cafes, and clubs.